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SUBJECT: EGYPT TO RATIFY MADRID PROTOCOL

¶1. After a December 16 joint Shura Council/People's Assembly Committee decision to approve the Madrid Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks, the Shura Council has approved the treaty for ratification. The People's Assembly began discussion of the treaty this week. Egypt has been a signatory of the Madrid Protocol since June 28, 1989 but never ratified the treaty, so it has not entered into force. We expect the People's Assembly to approve final ratification within the next few weeks. USAID-funded technical assistance projects have encouraged Egypt's ratification of the Protocol.

¶2. US-Egyptian trade is likely to benefit from Egypt's accession to the Madrid Protocol. US businesses will now be able to designate Egypt on their single trademark filing under the Madrid Protocol, rather than having to hire a local agent and file directly in the Egyptian Trademark Office in the Commercial Registry Administration. There are also other advantages to the Protocol. For example, filings and correspondence can be conducted in the English-language. Moreover, the Protocol is also beneficial in that it simplifies the subsequent management of a trademark, since a simple, single procedural step serves to record subsequent changes in ownership or the name or address of the holder with WIPO's International Bureau.

¶3. The protocol also allows Egyptian businesses to file their trademarks for registration in several foreign countries with a single filing, by simply designating the countries in which they want to register. Egyptian companies will have this advantage in an additional 27 countries or territories that have joined the Protocol but not the Madrid Agreement, including the United States and the European Union.
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